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Woodward, Fred James

Sulgrave  
The  
Ancestral Home  
of the  
Washingtons



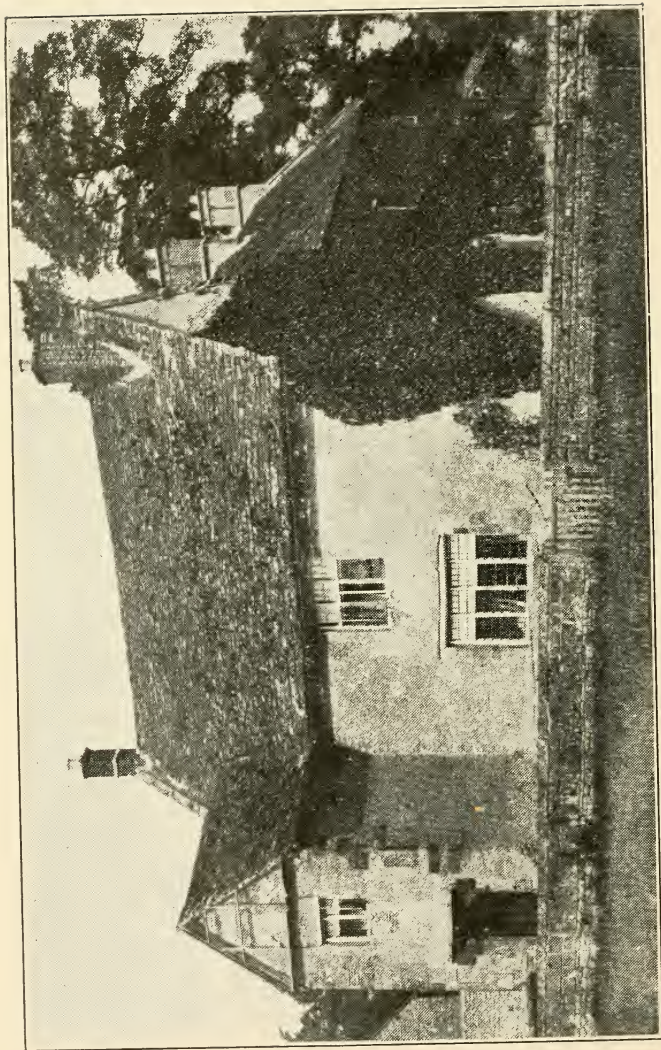


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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

This booklet is offered to the public in response to many requests. It may be educational to those who never heard of Sulgrave or associated it with the Washingtons. The illustration of Sulgrave Manor House is from one of several photographs recently taken in Sulgrave England.

There is much of interest connected with this historic place, which so brief an account could not contain. The writer wishes to acknowledge his indebtedness with thanks to the best authorities for what it contains of interest to the reader.



SULGRAVE MANOR HOUSE

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## SULGRAVE, THE ENGLISH HOME OF THE WASHINGTONS.

This is only a brief reference to a very interesting and historical place of which so much has been written. The name of George Washington and Mount Vernon are naturally associated in the minds of Americans. Of the thousands who visit Mount Vernon every year, how many associate Sulgrave with the Washingtons? There are many Americans who throng Stafford every year, perhaps only a small number are aware that the ancestral home of the Washingtons is only a few miles away. Still smaller the number who make the pilgrimage to Sulgrave or to Brington, ten miles further. Traditions of these places are closely connected with the ancestors of the Father of this Country. His stately home on the Potomac is not neglected by his countryman, but every American should be interested in the English forefathers of the man who more than any other, freed them from the "rule of kings."

That the Washington family is of ancient English stock, the genealogy of which has been traced up to the century immediately succeeding the Conquest. At that time it was in the possession of landed estates and manorial

privileges in the Country of Durham, enjoyed only by those or their descendants, who had come over from Normandy with the Conqueror, or fought under his standard. When William the Conqueror laid waste the whole country north of the Humber, in punishment of the insurrection of the Northumbrains, he appointed the estate among his followers, and advanced Normans and other foreigners to the principal ecclesiastical dignities. One of the most wealthy and important sees was that of Durham. Historians record that, among the Knights who held estates in the palatinate on these warlike conditions was William de Hertburn, the progenitor of Washington.

In the ancient church records of Womleighton are records of the marriage of Robert Washington in 1565 and birth of his son George Washington in 1608—antedating his famous namesake in America by more than a century. The story of Sulgrave's connection with the Washington is not common. In the reign of Henry the eighth, Lawrence Washington was mayor of Northampton. Sulgrave was among the confiscated church lands that the king was offering at bargain prices, and Washington purchased it for three hundred pounds. His grandson, another Lawrence Washington, sold the estate about 1606 and moved to Little Brington ten miles to the northwest of Sulgrave. The Lawrence Washington who is buried in Great Brington Church was the great-

great-grandfather of the first American. The frequent recurrence of the name of Lawrence in the Washington line is most confusing. Some genealogists believe that there was a marriage at an early date between the Lawrences and the ancestors of General Washington.

The chief Washington memorials here are the brasses—the inscriptions and the coat-of-arms, over the grave of Lawrence Washington of Sulgrave and Brington, and these are sunk deep in the stone slab and are guarded by lock and key.

Keen interest among historians and genealogists has for some years centred around Sulgrave, a picturesque hamlet in Northamptonshire, which claimed to be the ancestral home of the Washingtons, who lived here more than three centuries ago.

Sulgrave Manor is now little more than a farm house and sadly in need of repair. There are indications that it was a building of size and importance in its day.

The present living room of the house is a large square room with dark oak beams in the ceiling and a generous fire place, typical in this period. A dark oak stairway leads to the second floor, near to which is a large room simply furnished as a bed room. It was in this room that Lawrence Washington, son of Robert, and great-great-great grandfather of George Wash-

ington was born. At the head of the stairway is a spacious closet of special interest, as the place where Queen Elizabeth hid while engaged in a game of hide-and-seek during a visit to the manor-house when Robert Washington was living there.

At a meeting held at the Mansion House, called by the Lord Mayor of London, Jan. 23rd, 1914, when the keys of Sulgrave Manor-house were turned over to the Duke of Teck, Honorary Chairman of the British Committee, to arrange for the Celebration of the Hundred Years of Peace between England and the United States, by buying the English home of the family of George Washington.

The Patriotic Societies in America such as the Colonial Dames of America, and the National Society of Colonial Dames of America in conjunction with the British and American Committees are interesting themselves in the furnishing of Sulgrave Manor-house and will doubtless help to restore the interior of the old mansion to its former condition. In this patriotic work all Americans will connect with the same interest, Sulgrave and Mount Vernon.















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